

**Functional Series 400 – Personnel****ADS 461 – Employee Evaluation Program, Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service**

\*This new chapter is applicable to Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service employees.

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## **ADS 461 – Employee Evaluation Program, Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service**

### **461.1 OVERVIEW**

The Employee Evaluation Program (EEP) is intended to provide a systematic process by which the Agency involves its employees in improving organizational effectiveness in the accomplishment of the Agency's mission and goals by

- Establishing clear linkages among the Agency's goals, Operating Unit strategic objectives, and employees' work;
- Improving communications about organizational objectives and individual career goals;
- Developing the capacity to perform;
- Providing feedback to employees to motivate them to work more effectively, improve their skills, and prepare themselves for increased responsibilities;
- Correcting deficiencies and providing both positive and negative feedback (negative feedback must be in writing); and
- Providing a basis for cash awards, bonuses, and pay adjustments based on performance, and other non-monetary awards for performance.

This chapter applies to all

- Foreign Service (FS) and Senior Foreign Service (SFS) employees under the authority of Sections 601-605 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended.

This chapter does not apply to Civil Service (CS) employees (including Schedule C employees and employees whose appointments are administratively determined), Presidential Appointees, Senior Executive Service (SES) employees, or experts and consultants under the authority of 5 U.S.C. 43 and 5 CFR 430, Performance Management, Subpart B, Performance Appraisal for General Schedule, Prevailing Rate and Certain Other Employees. See [ADS 462](#) for the EEP for CS employees.

### **461.2 PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES**

**a.** The Principal Officer of an Operating Unit is responsible for managing his or her Operating Unit's performance evaluation program. This includes communicating objectives, goals, policies, procedures, and deadlines; ensuring compliance with the program; designating employees to play particular roles in the program; and keeping the Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources (M/HR) abreast of important information concerning the Employee Evaluation Program (EEP).

**b.** The Rating Official is responsible for working closely with individual employees throughout the review cycle to create performance plans, evaluating performance, providing feedback, and revising plans as appropriate. These actions culminate in the Rating Official's responsibility to provide a completed Annual Evaluation Form (AEF) for the Appraisal Committee and M/HR.

**c.** Employees are responsible for participating in their own evaluation from beginning to end. This includes helping to develop their performance plans, working toward the goals specified in the plan, evaluating themselves, and participating orally and in writing in review and feedback sessions.

**d.** The Appraisal Committee reviews and discusses AEFs and Skills Feedback Worksheets (SFWs) with Rating Officials, providing input to the evaluation, and formally approving the AEF. Throughout the evaluation process, the Appraisal Committee and individual members of the Committee ensure that Rating Officials comply with the policy directives and required procedures in this chapter. The Appraisal Committee provides assistance to, and helps to resolve conflicts for, Rating Officials and employees.

**e.** M/HR is responsible for this program's formulation, monitoring, revision, and training. Additionally, as appropriate, M/HR is responsible for action against those who fail to comply with this program.

### **461.3 POLICY DIRECTIVES AND REQUIRED PROCEDURES**

#### **461.3.1 Employee Evaluation Program Basics**

The Employee Evaluation Program (EEP) begins with the Principal Officer of each Operating Unit. The Principal Officer

- Establishes overall Operating Unit strategic objectives and communicates to employees the relationships among Agency goals and the Operating Unit's strategic objectives;
- Communicates information on the evaluation process to all employees in the unit, including establishing and publicizing internal deadlines and procedures for completing each phase of the process;
- Ensures the Operating Unit's adherence to Agency policies, procedures, and schedules governing the EEP; and
- Notifies M/HR of action that should be taken against employees who have failed to adhere to the policies, procedures, and schedules of the EEP.

In turn, M/HR initiates appropriate action against Agency management officials and employees who fail to comply with the policies, procedures, and schedules of the EEP. M/HR also formulates employee evaluation policies, procedures, and guidelines after monitoring the operation and evaluating implementation of the EEP, and the related pay and awards systems affected by this program.

To understand the policies and procedures for each part of the evaluation cycle, employees must first familiarize themselves with all aspects of the EEP.

#### **461.3.1.1 Appraisal Period**

USAID has established an appraisal period for Foreign Service and Senior Foreign Service employees. The length of the appraisal period is one year, which runs from April 1 through March 31. The Rating Official must complete written performance appraisals at the end of the rating cycle (see section [461.3.10](#)).

The minimum appraisal period is 120 days. All employees who are on an active performance plan of 120 days or more will receive an Annual Evaluation Form (AEF) (AID Form 461-1) at the end of their evaluation period.

#### **461.3.1.2 Appraisal Input Form (AIF)**

The Rating Official who is supervising the employee on March 31 is the rater of record and must complete the final AEF regardless of the number of days the employee has been under his/her supervision. The Rating Official of record must use AIFs and any other 360 degree information to complete the final AEF.

The raters of the employee must complete an AIF when either the supervisor or employee changes assignment or responsibility and when the employee has been supervised for at least 30 calendar days. The AIF records work objectives and performance measures. The Rating Official must

- Complete the AIF at least two weeks before either the employee or the Rating Official changes jobs;
- Provide the employee with the AIF at least five days prior to the performance feedback meeting;
- Hold a mandatory meeting with the employee to review and discuss the AIF; and
- Forward the AIF, with optional employee response, to the employee's next Rating Official (or Administrative Officer, EXO, or other employee designated by the Principal Officer) within two days after completion.

If an employee is on temporary duty (TDY) at another duty station for 30 days or more, an appropriate official at the TDY duty station must prepare an AIF on the employee's performance for the employee's Rating Official.

Additionally, if an employee is in language training for the majority of the rating cycle

and has been in more than one place for less than 120 days, an AEF need not be prepared. Employees who do not receive a current evaluation will receive a “B” from the Performance Board.

#### **461.3.1.3 Rating Officials**

The Principal Officer of the Operating Unit designates the Rating Official. Rating Officials play an essential role in the EEP since they

- Develop work objectives and performance measures for each rated employee;
- Observe, evaluate performance, and provide ongoing feedback to each employee;
- Provide negative feedback in a timely manner and in writing;
- Conduct at least one mandatory mid-cycle review with each employee;
- Review the employee’s self-assessment and work products, gather additional performance information from relevant sources (AIFs and other 360 degree input), draft the AEF (AID Form 461-1) and Skills Feedback Worksheet (SFW) (AID Form 461-3) and discuss both forms with the Appraisal Committee (AC), if requested, except at the end of the rating cycle;
- Submit the AEF to the AC for review and signature; and
- Discuss the final AEF and SFW with each rated employee.

Rating Officials and ACs have the authority to request the Principal Officer to forward to M/HR for appropriate disciplinary action the name of any employee who fails to adhere to the policies, procedures, and schedules of the EEP.

#### **461.3.1.4 Appraisal Committees (ACs)**

Appraisal Committees (ACs) provide an organizational perspective of an employee’s performance. The committees also ensure that all AEFs are equitable and objective. An AC or AC Representative is involved in every aspect of the EEP, if requested, but service by the AC members is mandatory at the end of the rating cycle.

##### **a. AC Functions**

ACs

- Review and sign performance plans, when requested by either the Rating Official or employee, and ensure that work objectives and performance measures are reasonable and attainable.

- Review substantive changes and sign mid-cycle performance reviews when requested by the Rating Official or employee.
- Assist Rating Officials with employee performance problems, when requested by the Rating Official or employee.
- Review and discuss draft AEFs and SFWs with Rating Officials, and recommend changes. This review includes ensuring that Rating Officials obtained 360 degree input and used it appropriately; ensuring that Rating Officials reviewed and considered employee self-assessments; and ensuring that evaluations are properly prepared and are equitable and objective.
- Recommend changes to AEFs. When the AC and Rating Official cannot agree on appropriate language, the Principal Officer must attempt to resolve differences. If the Rating Official and AC still do not agree, the AC may document its recommendations on the AEF, Section 8b.

**b. Who is on the AC?**

ACs are established at the beginning of the rating cycle and must include at least three members, not including Rating Officials. Rating Officials who are members of an AC must recuse themselves as members and may not participate in AC deliberations when the AC reviews the AEFs they prepared as Rating Officials and when the AC reviews their own AEF.

At least one member of the AC other than the Rating Official must be familiar with the work of the rated employee whose performance the AC will review. Large Operating Units must establish more than one AC to effectively review all employees.

The Principal Officer for each Operating Unit must establish the AC. The Officer must appoint only U.S. direct-hire career employees to ACs. Probationary CS and Career Candidate FS employees are not eligible to serve on ACs. The Principal Officer may appoint supervisors, managers, or other individuals who have knowledge of the work of the Operating Unit.

**461.3.1.5 Annual Evaluation Form (AID Form 461-1)**

**a. The AEF**

The AEF (AID Form 461-1) is used to evaluate the performance of all FS and SFS employees. The Rating Official and AC prepare, approve, and sign all AEFs .

See the [EEP Guidebook Part 1, Foreign Service](#), for detailed information on the annual evaluation process.

When completing the AEF, do not exceed the space allowed. Complete the forms in 10 point Arial font only.

The AEF consists of eight sections:

**1. Section 1 – Administrative Data**

Rating Officials complete this section, giving basic information, at the beginning of the rating cycle.

**2. Section 2 – Authentication of Final Annual Evaluation**

Rating Officials complete this section by having appropriate parties sign to show that the final AEF has been put in place.

**3. Section 3 – Final Annual Evaluation Performance Results**

Rating Officials complete this section by stating whether the employee met his/her work objectives and skill standards.

**4. Section 4 – Role In The Organization**

Rating Officials describe the employee's role in the organization in terms of organizational setting, continuing responsibilities, and functions within the Operating Unit, including resources managed.

**5. Section 5 – Performance Plan**

Rating Officials establish one to three work objectives and no more than one to two performance measures for each work objective.

**6. Section 5b – Authentication of Performance Plan**

Rating Officials complete this section by having appropriate parties sign to show that the performance plan has been put in place.

**7. Section 6 – Formal Mid-Cycle Review**

Rating Official documents mid-point progress review meeting, which includes any changes that have been made to work objectives and performance measures.

**8. Section 6b – Authentication of formal Mid-Cycle Review**

Rating Officials complete this section by having appropriate parties sign to show that the mid-cycle review took place.



**9. Section 7 – Assessment of Performance, Skills, and Potential**

Rating Officials prepare a written assessment of the employee's performance, skills, and potential.

Rating Officials indicate the 360 degree sources used.

Rating Officials indicate whether or not the employee met individual work objectives.

**10. Section 8 – AC Members and Comments**

The AC provides written comments of any recommended changes to the Rating Official.

**b. Skills Feedback Worksheet**

This worksheet is used to provide feedback and career guidance to employees. The Rating Official gives this form to the employee at the same time the employee receives his/her final AEF. It is not submitted to M/HR for filing in the employee's Performance Evaluation File. When completing this worksheet, the Rating Official must take into account the personal grade of the employee.

**c. Skills Matrix**

This chart explains the skills area and sub-skills based on performance-level definitions.

**d. Employee Statement**

This form (AID Form 461-2) is used to enable employees to comment on the evaluation of their performance.

**461.3.2 Performance Plans**

Performance plans are documents prepared by the Rating Official in consultation with the employee that contain statements of performance expectations and results to be achieved. The plan informs the employee of the measures by which his or her performance will be judged. Performance plans consist of work objectives and performance measures.

The Rating Official writes and approves the performance plan and gives it to the employee within 45 days of the beginning of the annual rating cycle or the employee's assignment to a new position. The AC reviews and signs performance plans only if requested by the employee or Rating Official.

#### **461.3.2.1 Work Objectives**

Employees and their Rating Officials are to collaborate in the development of work objectives. Work objectives must be within the employee's control to accomplish. Performance plans must have at least one work objective and no more than three. Work objectives must be commensurate with the employee's personal grade, not position grade.

#### **461.3.2.2 Performance Measures**

Employees and their Rating Officials must define no more than two performance measures for each work objective. Performance measures address quantity, quality, timeliness, or the most cost-effective way of accomplishing the work objective.

#### **461.3.2.3 Review and Approval of Performance Plans**

An AC Representative is assigned to each Operating Unit to serve as a liaison among employees, Rating Officials, and the AC. The AC Representative, when requested, will

- a. Review, provide input, and approve performance plans for all employees in the Operating Unit; and
- b. Review and approve any substantive revision of work objectives or performance measures during the rating period.

An employee's performance plan becomes effective when the Rating Official and employee sign the AEF. If an employee declines to sign the AEF, the Rating Official will annotate the AEF with an "x" in the employee signature block. If this is the case, the AC Representative also signs. The date the Rating Official and AC Representative annotate the AEF is the date the performance plan becomes official.

#### **461.3.3 Deficient Performance**

If an employee is not performing satisfactorily against established work objectives and performance measures or is displaying deficiencies in specific skill areas, the Rating Official must provide early and constructive feedback in writing outlining the measures the employee must take to improve.

#### **461.3.3.1 Managing Performance Problems**

Misconduct is generally a failure to follow a workplace rule (whether written or unwritten). Although it is common for performance and misconduct to be interrelated, it is important to recognize the difference between the two. On issues of misconduct, the Rating Official must seek guidance from the Labor and Employee Relations (M/HR/LER) staff. When the issue is primarily a performance problem, the Rating Official must communicate expectations and performance problems to the employee.

Consistent performance feedback is the best way to prevent performance problems from developing. In most cases, an open line of communication between the Rating Official and employee can resolve or improve performance problems. When the Rating Official determines that there is a performance problem, the Rating Official must conduct a counseling session with the employee. The counseling session will

- a. Specify in which work objectives or performance measures the employee is performing poorly;
- b. Communicate the “Met” level of performance for the objective or measure; and
- c. Specify, in writing, how the employee can improve to achieve the “Met” level of performance.

#### **461.3.4 Progress Reviews**

Rating Officials must conduct at least one progress review with each employee, normally at mid-cycle during an appraisal period, and are encouraged to provide progress reviews to employees on a continuous basis throughout the rating cycle.

For the mid-cycle progress review, employees must provide the Rating Official with 360 degree sources (names of customers, peers, subordinates (if any), and any other person with whom they may have worked during the rating cycle) who can provide the Rating Official with information about their performance.

During progress reviews, Rating Officials and employees are to discuss the employee's progress toward achieving work objectives. If an employee is failing to meet a work objective, the Rating Official must counsel the employee and document in writing his or her deficient performance.

Rating Officials must document on the AEF in Section 6 – Formal Mid-Point Progress Review AEF, any revisions, additions, or deletions to work objectives or performance measures.

The Rating Official and employee must sign the AEF indicating that a mid-cycle progress review took place. The AC Representative will be brought into the process and sign the AEF, if requested. However, if the employee has failed a work objective or is deficient in a skill area (“Not Met”), it is mandatory that the Rating Official notify the AC. If an employee declines to sign a mid-cycle review, the Rating Official will check the box in Section 6. If this is the case, the AC Representative will also sign. The review then becomes part of the official rating of record.

### **461.3.5 Gathering Appraisal Information**

Rating Officials must base employee performance appraisals on multiple sources of information, including the following:

- a. Direct observation of performance and evaluation of representative work products;
- b. The employee's self-assessment of performance;
- c. Information solicited from individuals who can provide informed views of the employee's performance during the rating cycle (360 degree input sources);
- d. If rating a supervisor, the Rating Official must receive comments from at least two subordinates; and
- e. All AIFs received from Rating Officials.

#### **461.3.5.1 Employee Self-Assessments**

At the end of the appraisal period, employees must provide Rating Officials with a written assessment of their performance during the appraisal period. Employees must include on the self-assessment all comments received from AIFs received from other offices.

#### **461.3.5.2 360 Degree Input Sources**

##### **a. Employee Submission of Names**

At the end of the appraisal period, employees must also provide the Rating Official with the names of customers, peers, subordinates (if any), and any other person with whom they may have worked during the appraisal period who can provide the Rating Official with information about their performance. Rating Officials must contact at least three of these sources for performance information.

##### **b. Agreeing on 360 Degree Input Sources**

Rating Officials and employees are required to agree on at least three individuals whom the Rating Official will contact to gather performance information. Rating Officials are free to contact more than three individuals on the employee's list or other sources deemed appropriate to the Rating Official. AC members may be consulted.

Rating Officials of supervisors are required to contact no fewer than two of the supervisor's subordinates for information about the supervisor's human resource management skills.

### **c. Soliciting Input from 360 Degree Input Sources**

Rating Officials must focus their questions on job-relevant discussions of work objectives and performance measures. It is the Rating Official's responsibility to reconcile any differences of opinion and determine which viewpoint is most accurate. It is not appropriate for the Rating Official to convene a meeting of 360 degree input sources to discuss an employee in order to resolve conflicting input.

Rating Officials' notes on feedback from 360 degree input sources are personal working notes. There is no requirement to maintain these notes or provide them to the employee. However, if significant performance problems are identified during the process that will result in an employee failing to meet his or her work objectives or being deficient in one or more skill areas, then the Rating Official must maintain supporting documentation obtained from all sources.

Rating Officials must request 360 degree feedback from the respective USAID/Washington Offices of Financial Management, Procurement, or General Counsel regarding the employee's job knowledge and performance for Controllers, Contracting Officers, and Legal Advisors respectively. However, Rating Officials must not draw a negative inference if a USAID/W office does not submit a 360 degree statement for a Controller, Contracting Officer, or Legal Advisor.

#### **461.3.6 Final AEF**

Using the multiple sources of information described in [461.3.5](#), the Rater of Record must prepare the final AEF. Rating Officials must determine as a factual matter whether the employee met or did not meet the performance measure(s) of each work objective.

##### **461.3.6.1 Skills Matrix and Potential**

Rating Officials must use the Skills Matrix to prepare end-of-year AEFs. The Skills Matrix consists of four skill areas with four to five sub-skills. The four skill areas are

- Resource Management,
- Leadership,
- Technical and Analytical, and
- Teamwork and Professionalism.

The Skills Matrix defines all the skill areas and breaks down each skill into four to five sub-skills. Each skill area defines what the employee is expected to do according to his or her personal grade level.

When Rating Officials prepare the end-of-year AEF, they must not make recommendations for promotion or tenure. However, they should discuss all four skill areas in relation to rank/grade along with 360 degree quotes, and show how the employee made an impact on the overall mission or sector. They should also discuss

the employee's willingness to be innovative, take on non-traditional or hardship assignments, or take calculated risks.

Rating Officials must highlight at least one sub-skill area from the next higher level for the employee to develop further. This will include areas of excellence or potential for developing specific FS competencies that might positively affect career development.

#### **461.3.6.2 Skills Feedback Worksheet (SFW)**

The SFW (AID Form 461-3) is a tool that guides the Rating Official during the employee feedback session. The Rating Official must use the SFW at the end of the FS evaluation period, to provide performance feedback to the employee on the sub-skills in the Skills Matrix. The AC reviews the SFW only when requested by the Rating Official or employee. However, it is not part of the official rating of record.

#### **461.3.7 Employee Feedback Sessions**

The Rating Official must discuss the draft AEF with the employee. This discussion allows the employee to point out any discrepancies, inconsistencies, or omissions on the draft AEF.

The employee has five working days from the date of the discussion of his or her AEF to submit documentation, etc., regarding this matter. The Rating Official then has two working days to revise the AEF, as appropriate.

The Rating Official must conduct an end-of-cycle performance review with the employee at which the Rating Official discusses the employee's evaluation, areas for improvement, and career development needs and goals. Career development discussions may result in proposed formal training, on-the-job training, stretch assignments, or recommended reassignments.

The Rating Official must use the SFW (AID Form 461-3) as a feedback tool and provide the employee with a copy. This document is not submitted to M/HR, but remains with the employee and the Rating Official.

Employees must be given the opportunity to express any concerns with the evaluation and are strongly encouraged to prepare an Employee Statement (AID Form 461-2). Employees have a mandatory period of five working days to review the approved AEF and prepare an Employee Statement, if desired.

#### **461.3.8 AC Review of the Final Evaluation**

ACs are responsible for reviewing and discussing each employee's end-of-year AEF and SFW with the responsible Rating Official.

When reviewing an employee's evaluation, ACs have the authority to review self-assessments, contact anyone (including the employee and selected 360 degree input sources), and review documents relied on by the Rating Official in order to make appropriate recommendations.

ACs are responsible for ensuring that AEFs are balanced, fair, and accurate.

ACs do not have the authority to direct or make substantive changes to an AEF, but may make recommendations to the Rating Official. If the AC and Rating Official cannot agree on appropriate language, the Principal Officer must attempt to resolve differences. If the Rating Official and AC still do not agree, the AC may document its recommendations on the AEF, Section 8b.

AC members who reviewed final AEFs must sign the final AEF.

#### **461.3.9      Principal Officer's Role**

The Principal Officer is responsible for managing the Operating Unit's performance evaluation program by adhering to Agency policies, procedures, and schedules. The Principal Officer also disseminates information on the EEP to Rating Officials and employees in the Operating Unit.

Principal Officers establish Operating Unit AC membership, standard procedures, and internal deadlines and designate Rating Officials, who in most situations will be the employee's supervisor.

If differences develop with the Rating Official and AC regarding the AC's recommendations, the Principal Officer must attempt to resolve the differences and urge both parties to agree on appropriate language.

#### **461.3.10      Submission of Annual Evaluation Forms**

The AMS, EXO, or other employee designated by the Principal Officer must forward approved AEFs to the Bureau for Management, Office of Human Resources, Executive Management (M/HR/EM) for retention in the employee's Performance Evaluation File (PEF) and distribution as appropriate. The Principal Officer of an Operating Unit is responsible for ensuring that all AEFs are submitted to M/HR/EM.

All AEFs submitted after the prescribed due dates must include a statement explaining the reasons for the lateness. M/HR/EM will review these statements to determine whether the delays have been adequately explained. If it is determined that the delay was not justified, M/HR/EM will refer the matter to the Director, Office of Human Resources (M/HR), who will decide what action should be taken. The Director, M/HR may decide to issue a critical letter, which will be placed in the employee's Performance Evaluation File for two years. If deemed warranted, this letter will serve to deny or reduce any award or performance bonus for the year in which the AEFs were due.

### **461.3.11 Training**

All Agency employees will receive training and information about the EEP. Information will include a guidebook (see mandatory reference, [Employee Evaluation Program Guidebook Part 1, Foreign Service](#)) describing the operation of the program and the roles and responsibilities of employees, Rating Officials, and ACs. In addition to this and Agency-sponsored supervisory and managerial courses and other learning activities, Operating Units may request special briefings or training sessions on the program.

## **461.4 MANDATORY REFERENCES**

### **461.4.1 External Mandatory References**

- a. Foreign Service Act of 1980, as amended, Chapter 6, Promotion and Retention

### **461.4.2 Internal Mandatory References**

- a. [ADS 463, Foreign Service Boards](#)
- \*b. [Employee Evaluation Program Guidebook Part 1, Foreign Service](#)

### **461.4.3 Mandatory Forms**

- \*a. **AID Form 461-1, Annual Evaluation Form**  
[Note: This document is only available on the intranet (<http://inside.usaid.gov/forms/>). Please contact **ads@usaid.gov** if you need a copy.]
- \*b. **AID Form 461-2, Employee Statement**  
[Note: This document is only available on the intranet (<http://inside.usaid.gov/forms/>). Please contact **ads@usaid.gov** if you need a copy.]
- \*c. **AID Form 461-3, Skills Feedback Worksheet Foreign Service**  
[Note: This document is only available on the intranet (<http://inside.usaid.gov/forms/>). Please contact **ads@usaid.gov** if you need a copy.]
- d. **AID Form 400-1B, Appraisal Input Form**  
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## **461.5 ADDITIONAL HELP**



## **461.6            DEFINITIONS**

The terms and definitions listed below have been incorporated into the ADS Glossary. See the [ADS Glossary](#) for all ADS terms and definitions.

### **360 degree sources**

Customers, peers, other managers, subordinates, and other individuals with whom or for whom an employee may have worked who can provide feedback, from their various perspectives, about the employee's performance during any period of performance currently being evaluated. (Chapters 461, 462)

### **Annual Evaluation Form (AEF)**

The form used to evaluate employees under the Employee Evaluation Program (EEP). (Chapters 415, 461, 462, 463)

### **annual rating cycle (Foreign Service)**

A one-year evaluation period, which is April 1 – March 31. (Chapter 461)

### **Appraisal Committee (Foreign Service)**

A committee that reviews and provides management input into employee work objectives and performance measures (if requested), reviews mid-point performance (if requested), and reviews end-of-year AEFs (mandatory). (Chapter 461)

### **Appraisal Committee Representative**

A member of the Appraisal Committee (AC), who acts as liaison to the AC for a specific employee and his/her Rating Official. (Chapters 461, 462)

### **Appraisal Input Form (AIF)**

An evaluation form covering a period of performance that is long enough to require written documentation of performance against an established performance plan but not long enough to be considered representative of the employee's performance for the entire annual rating cycle. (Chapters 461, 462)

### **feedback**

Communicating to employees the extent to which their performance does not meet, meets, or exceeds expectations, the adequacy of their relevant skills, and their progress toward career development goals. (Chapters 461, 462)

### **mid-cycle review**

A mandatory progress review to be held by the Rating Official and employee at the mid-point in the appraisal period. (Chapters 461, 462)

**minimum appraisal period**

The minimum performance period that must be completed before a performance rating can be given. (Chapters 461, 462)

**performance measure**

Criteria (qualitative and quantitative) that measure an employee's achievement of a given work objective. (Chapter 461)

**performance plan**

The completed Annual Evaluation Form at the beginning of the performance cycle, which consists of work objectives and performance measures. (Chapters 461, 462)

**Principal Officer**

The most senior officer in a USAID Operating Unit, who establishes the Appraisal Committees for that Operating Unit, e.g., Assistant Administrator, Independent USAID/W Office Director, Mission Director, or USAID Representative. (Chapters 461, 462)

**progress review**

Progress reviews are held periodically throughout the rating cycle, during which the Rating Official provides feedback to the employee about performance or progress toward career development goals. Also see mid-cycle review. (Chapters 461, 462)

**Rating Official**

The employee's immediate supervisor or team leader, as designated by the Principal Officer. (Chapters 461, 462)

**Rater of Record (Foreign Service)**

The Rating Official who supervises the employee at the end of the evaluation period, March 31. (Chapter 461)

**skills area**

The four skill areas are Resource Management, Leadership, Technical and Analytical, and Teamwork and Professionalism. (Chapter 461)

**skill level**

The level that an employee is rated against to determine whether he or she is meeting or exceeding the expectations of his/her personal grade. (Chapter 461)

**Skills Matrix**

A chart explaining the skill areas and sub-skills based on performance-level definitions. (Chapter 461)

**sub-skills**

Definitions within each skill area on the Skills Matrix that describe the expected levels of performance at each grade. (Chapter 461)

**work objectives**

Expectations for an employee established by management for a particular rating period.  
(Chapters 461, 462)

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